THRESHOLD

'88

Threshold

creative arts magazine

1988

The creative arts magazine presents poems, stories, photographs and works of art created by Yavapai College students. The layout and design was produced by the Commercial Art Design, Production and Illustration classes.

Granite Street

Where relentless light and heat shimmered
Upon wormless weathered sand and soil-less mountains,
There was born a meadow of cool repose
Under a mint-green band of broadleaf shade
By mossy pristine creek nurtured,
Where fallen leaves found time to moulder
In God's time, worm-turned to chocolate loam,
That squirrel and fox and playful coatimundi called home.
Rusty-brown Canyon wren notching into memory
Her brilliant cascading song Come here
Come here
Come back here

Bright with the wren's song this June day's morn,
Chopping weeds that nudged beans and corn,
She heard the tap-tapping on the stakes,
Ever louder the ringing rattle of his chain.
"Leave," the white man said, "This is to be Townsite."
But the squaw listened to the wren.
He commanded, pointing with doublejacks,
"You live up there," (up there on
The square now misshapen)
Bent like all white man's promises.
She softly said, "Beans, corn grow good here,"
As he pounded in the next stake he vowed,
"I'll walk my horse on her rows tonight."

When later the Chinese found the loam,
Life and love again filled the field
Bending, laughing, sweating, they shoulder-carried
The hampers of greens to the big houses on the hill,
The Great Fire of centuries turns slowing only for a day
This flow of fresh plenty.

After the fire, a two-family home arose
On the ever narrowing field
And there was love under her pyramid roof,
where children were conceived and born,
In bedrooms dark and warm, and at dawn
From the trees came the wren's song.

She would have been tenderly restored
Even graced a "Registered Place"
If she had been with her laced cousins on the hill.
But down on Granite Street
The front-end loader stalked and circled
Searching for her weakness, then rushed in
And cracked her knee-caps and
As she sank, the bucket was raised higher yet
To bludgeon relentlessly her head.
She dies appealing to stumps of Cottonwoods for support.

The Canyon wren comes home no more
To Granite Street, now Bankers Row
Where now the only warmth is in pocket coins
Changing hands
Above concrete-smothered loam.

Photograph by Jean Wilson

Bob Angus

Violin utters unearthly screams
Ascend to crescendo
On serpent's wings
Attempting no mastery
Of life's mystery
Light dances on polished wood and strings
Darting like pixies
Teases wild eyes
Lids must lower
Genuflect
Forsaking compromise

Bodies writhe pure emotion
Plunge to dementia's depths
Sorrow stabs sonorous
Addicted
I breathe with the bow
Hair uncoils cobras
My nerves are four taut strings
Hissing anticipation
Pleading to explode

Slice me with a high note
Melancholy
Shrill
Quivering
My lust escapes
Like blood
Oozing
At your feet

Jill Michelle Phillips

Drawing by Stephen Mason

Print by R. E. Brandt

Prints by R. E. Brandt

Drawing by Stephen Mason

Two Boys

held to the earth by bigger clothes
ratty and holey
dusty and taken by the summer's events
are finished brawling each other.
Him as the Duke,
and him as He-Man, because he's bigger.
They plopped down
rippling like grapes
that missed the can in the alley
and became raisins in the sun.

How come you never die
when i kill you?
the small boy wipes his wet nose into his palm.
he sniffs.
He-Man doesn't die, you know that.
so he flexes his tanned biceps.
He-Man is too powerful, see.

ya? Well the Duke's least got fight scars.
so he peels his sticky shirt tail up.
there is a wonderful, handsome smear
of red-black scabs
the size of a dog's paw.
an' i got this too,

he curls his jeans leg up
to display a mean slash scar
the length of his shin
the shape of a cross.

The other scars you could see plain
if you were looking
or if you weren't
stretching purple paths off his chin
over the backs of his dry hands
and an angry bumpy one on his brow.

he put his carrot-colored head
back against the bricks
closed his ivory blue eyes.
i sure done things, he contemplated.

that's nothin'.
He-Man smiles like a horse
like Mr. Ed, that horse.

i got silver braces.

cars rip by.
sun beats and beats.

MAGO S.F.

The Doll

Softly crying, little girl,
Heart so full of hurt.
Beside her new Kentucky home,
Fingers absently sifting dirt.

Wisconsin was so far away,
Lost friends, both girls and boys,
Lonely, for an eight-year-old,
And Mom forgot the toys.

Missing her doll, so tattered and old,
Her arms just ached to hold
Something, an anything, to love,
To comfort, caress and enfold.

A piece of weathered 2X4
Was lying on the ground.
She picked it up - hoping . . . ,
Wrapped in old rags she found.

Cuddling her stiff new baby board,
Her eyes no longer cry;
Though inside, her heart still aches,
She sings a lullaby.

Janice Antes

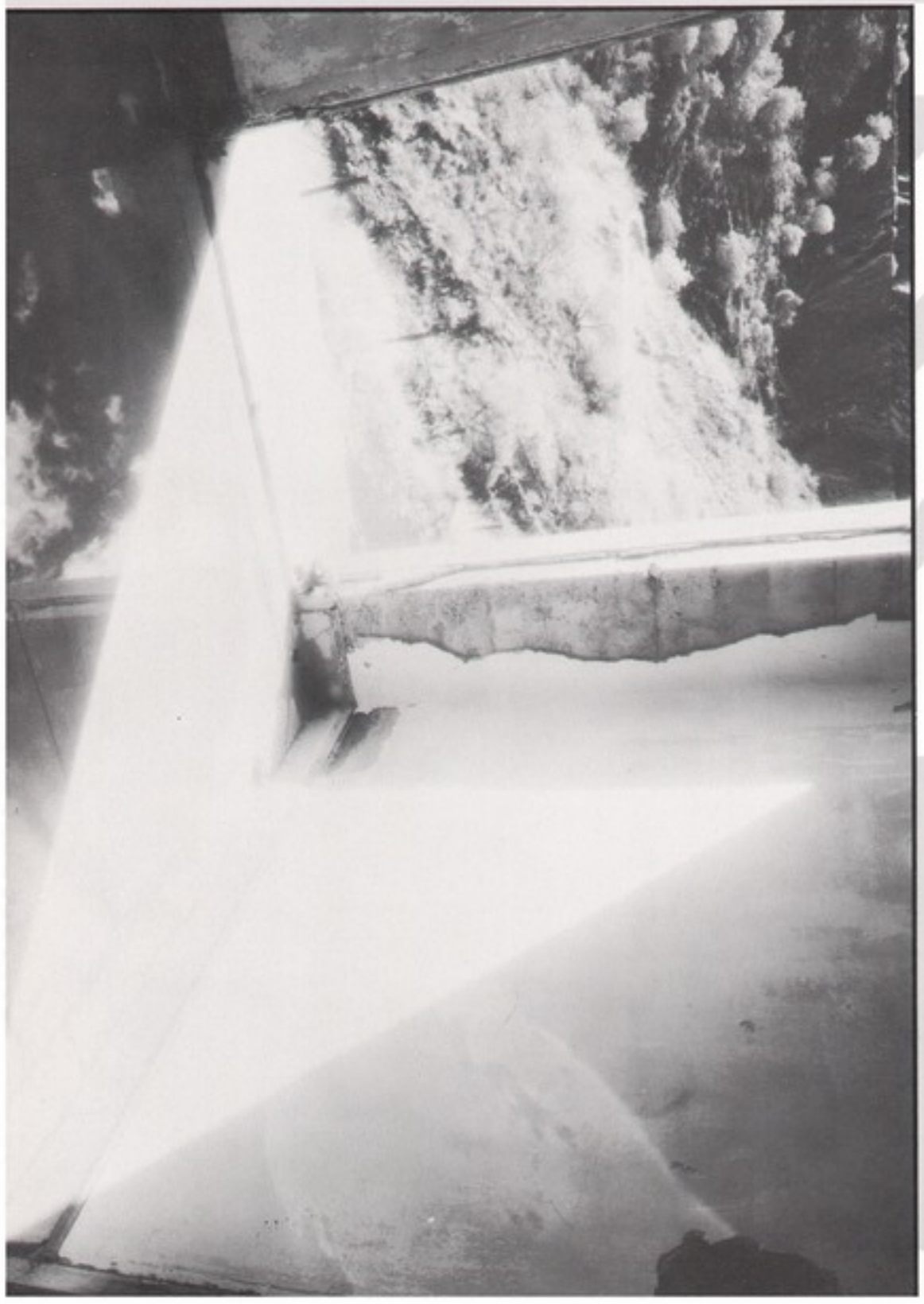
Eureka !

Thirsty
Little chipmunk
Foraging far afield----
Slowly sips some snow-broth from the
Gutter.

June Drummond

Photograph by Mark Hendrickson

Photograph by Mark Hendrickson



Photograph by Mark Hendrickson

Photograph by Mark Hendrickson

Illustration by Julie Riley

Sand Castles

God sat down by the seashore
And started to build
First he built a barrier of sand to hold back
The waves from the sand
Then he scooped a handful of silty sand
Creating a valley
And he set it down again
Creating a mountain
He did this many times
Then, he took seashells
And set them amoungst the hills and valleys
And he wove seaweed
Snatching great twines of it
Into bundling arms,
And laying it down upon
The land, gingerly
Thus, He created vegetation and creatures
But His creation sat dormant

So, He searched around the beach at the others
And with a new inspiration
He carved out a face in the sand
His face, as he thought he appeared
Gently, He carved out the cheeks
(that were His own)
And, thoughtfully, he swept away
The sand below the chin
He stuck His finger between the three
Drew the mouth, pressed out the eyes
(these, too, were His)
And then He scrunched up his nose
And then He sat back
And looked at Himself, waiting
And it laid Dormant

So, He made another like it
This one would be a girl, He thought
Then, He sat back and waited
But it still laid dormant

He fussed and knotted His brows
And then He said,
"PLAY WITH ME!"
"PLAY WITH ME, I WANT TO PLAY"
But He was still alone, without
A playmate

Perhaps He wasn't loud enough
So He tried it again
"PLAY WITH ME OR I WILL BREAK THE WALL
THAT HOLDS BACK THE WAVES!"
His creation laid dormant
So, He stomped
Out the sea wall
And the seaweed re-joined the seaweed
And the shells became buried
And the sand
Shifted into a formless mass

But the idea remained locked
Within the creator
And so, He rebuilt
All was as it was before
(There was no change)
Except He knew He could not force His
Creation to play with him

So, now, He fetched His puppy
"Play with it, puppy"
The puppy, responding to his master's hand
Jumped into the creation
And romped and stomped
And rolled
And whined and barked
On the creation
But it still sat dormant

Sadly, He searched His creation
He didn't understand why it would not
Play

And then,
God heard his parents call
And scooping up His puppy
He scampered off to join them
And
Abandoned
The creation He had made

As night fell
The re-created wall fell
The vegetation fell back into the sea
The shells joined them
And the sand
The wetted sand
glittered and danced
And played
with the moonlight

by P.S.

BIRTHDAY

Cry then, newly-born, roar and squirm
And squeeze your eyes against this glass-hard glare.
I understand your outrage.
A plastic nest is a poor substitute
For the warm, wet womb,
Even if it is air-conditioned.

Things will get better, you'll see.
The food improves beyond your wildest dreams,
Though the package will never again
Be so beautiful, the temperature
So perfect, or the service
So single-mindedly attentive.

By and by this piercing frost of light
Will melt and flow and clump and separate
And form your glowing universe,
This frightening noise will soften
Into nursery-rhymes and lullabies,
This hardness into caresses.

Your cries will soon turn to smiles
And then to laughter. For the longest time
You'll laugh and cry alternately.
Then, finally and blessedly
You'll learn, after much practice
To laugh and weep at the same time.

Tom Bailey

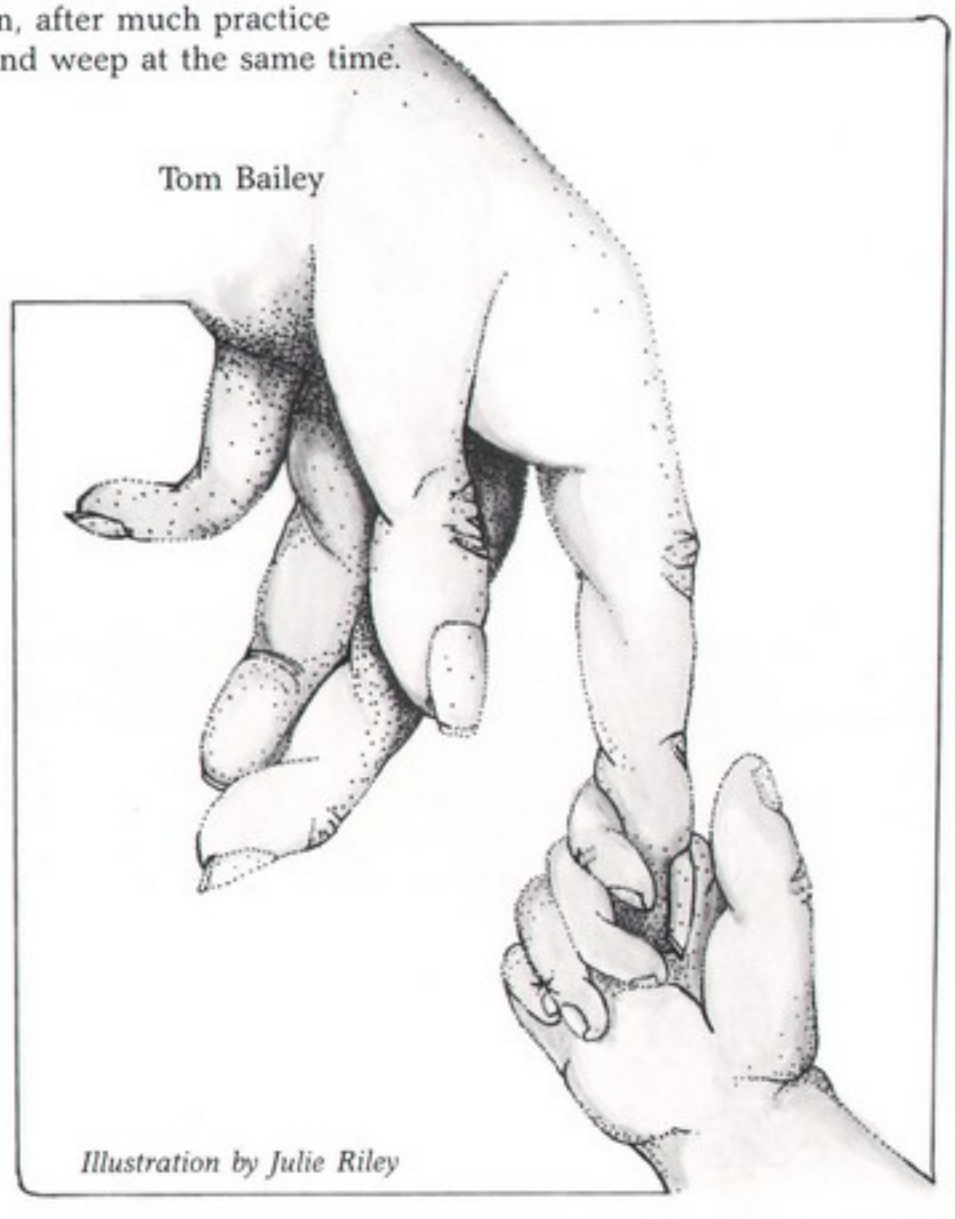


Illustration by Julie Riley

Apology To My Grandmother

I remember sitting at your bedpost.
It was clinical to me,
then.
Bones thrusting through withered skin
spittle collecting in the corner of your mouth,
a face familiar, yet, not yours.
No dignity here
no glory in dying
just warm streams of air
creaking from the battered fan.
Eyes ajar
you flung your arms, fingers spread
into the air
and waited for someone
to bend down
and cradle your fear in their arms.
All the while
Father Colleary droned
a final benediction with bent head
and whiskey-laden breath,
his presence added a legitimacy to the day.
(you must have a priest when you die,
you always said)
I loved you
but tongue cemented to palate
I could whisper no words of life.
Instead I
stared
angry,
fascinated,
hypnotized by the reflection
of my own death.

Nancie McAnaugh-Dunno

1. *Ceramics by Cathy Rhoads and Donajean Humbert*

2. *Woodcraft by Suzanne B. Jernigan*

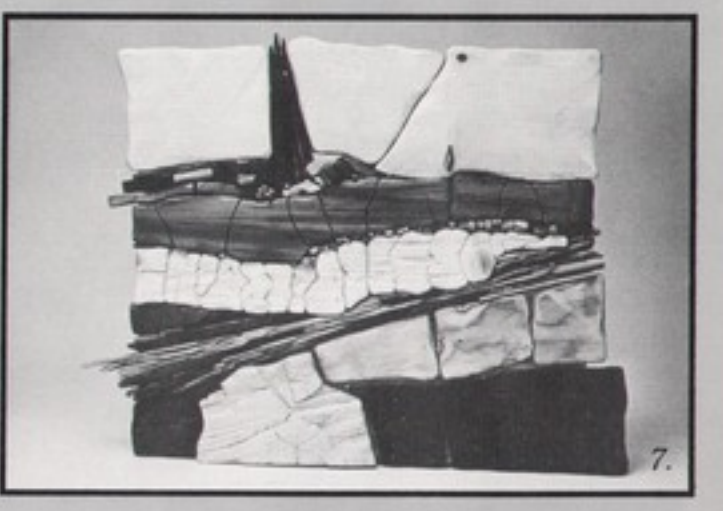
3. *Sculpture by Jane Embertson*

4. *Sculptured by Barbara D. Zirinsky*

1.

5.

6.

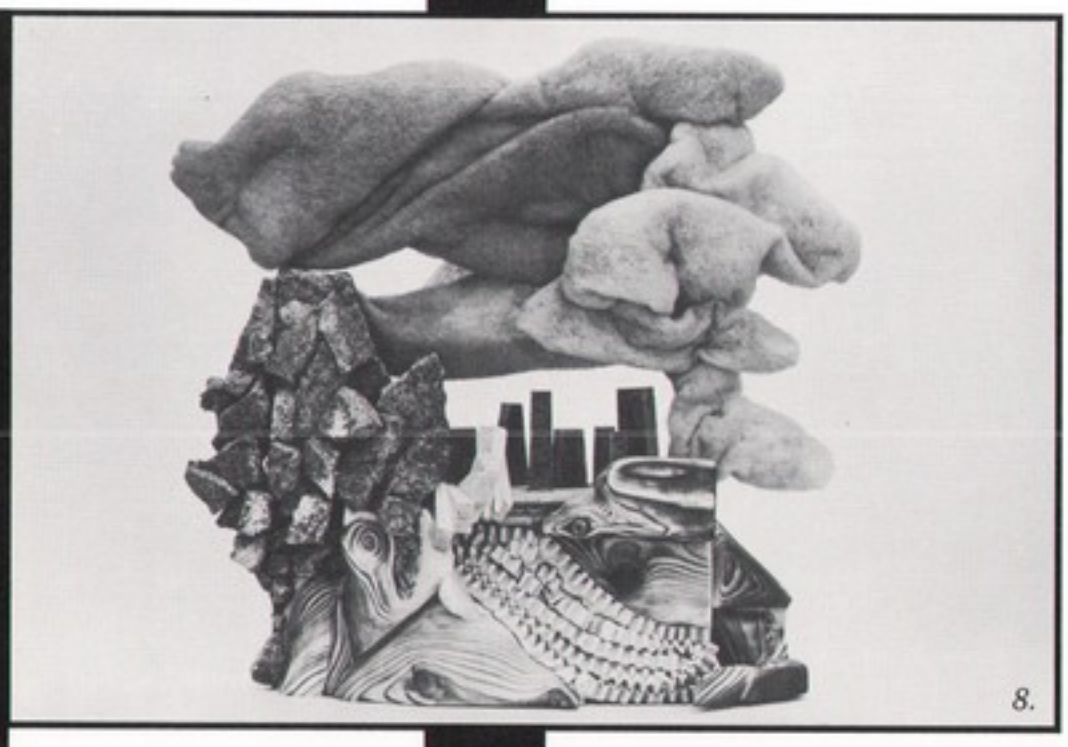


7.

2.

3.

4.



8.

5. *Sculpture by Barbara D. Zirinsky*

6. *Metalsmithing by Christina Hillenbrand-Bartelt*

7. *Woodcraft by Eleanor Bostwick*

8. *Sculpture by Don Cox*

Illustration by Brannon Couch

an ode to sivvy
(to Sylvia Plath)

by and by i wait for time to change
my mind to mold my heart
to do its number on my number
and make me who i will and am,
and you are there
i have a vision of your head
stuck in an oven
your face is white
your head is dull and weightless.

i remember how i told my mum
i would not live in '88
that reagan would have to step down
without me in the audience,
that my twenties would be spent
underground
no sound
i would not expound on daily pains
and would not gain more truth than i should
think i could handle
and this other vision,
of your hands in the keys of a typewriter
making things mad
feeling quite sad and looking shrilly
while holding on to a glass of cold joy
sticks, and sticks to me like skin and ice on skin,
warm human skin.

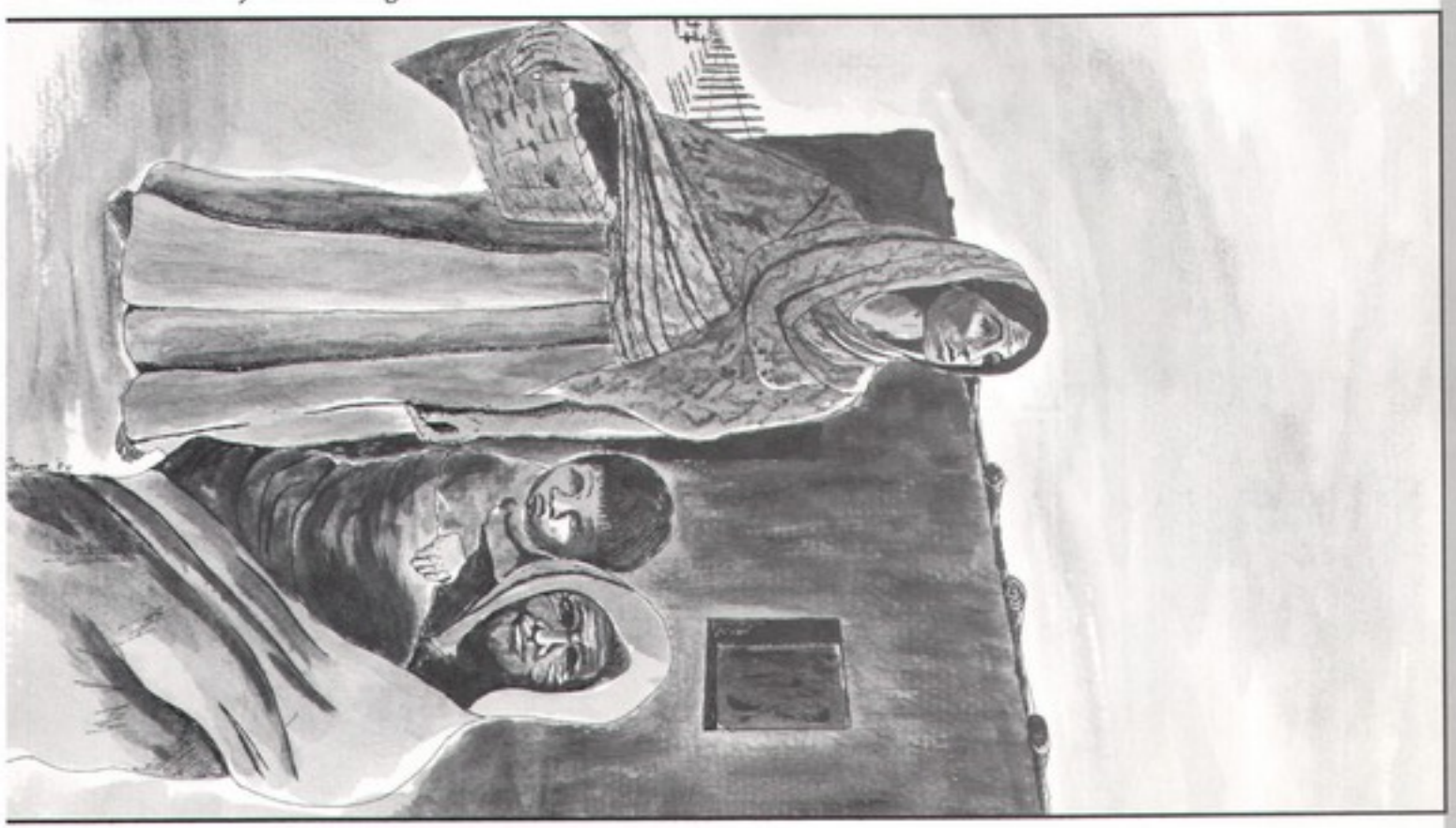
you know, i am almost glad you're gone,
i just want to let you see
that what you left undone,
i will put together with devotion
to pure finishing and furbishing
i won't change a thing, except,
killing myself as slowly—
i'll go with ends

Mago S.F.

Illustration by Corina Edgar

Illustration by Alvin L. Yazzie

Illustration by Corina Edgar



EN LA FINCA

Nancie McAnaugh-Dunno

Mama kept saying
"Mother earth will feed you."
But stale tortillas and
a cupful of beans
weigh light on the stomach
after a draining day of picking.
Her face parched,
wrinkles thrown one over another,
pooling sweat
I never saw her without a child
strapped to her back.
They passed so quickly
like morning mist hanging
over the coffee bushes.
I missed Pablo the most,
getting weaker he finally
dug himself into a shell and died.
(we had to pay a tax to bury him)
En la finca
even the sun frantically
clutches to the sky.

once a year the great landowner came,
his corpulent body swollen into a suit of vanilla
with gold buttons that snatched the sun's rays
and cast them arrogantly toward the sky.
And I remember thinking
he has no bones.

Any minute now he will melt
seeping into a pile of flesh
and the men with black sticks
will have to sweep him to his car.
Mama told me to dance
but I sewed myself into her musty skirts,
too proud to dance a lie.
En la finca
even the sun frantically
clutches
to the sky.

In the evenings, sometimes,
when hot breezes caress rows of grass
and the red-dust sky glistens
over the night
I dream of the city
where coffee bushes don't exist
and there is nothing to pick except a day's dresses.
Then I hear the whispers
low-moaning at first, later pitched high,
"This is the life you will also lead
having many children and watching
them die."
En la finca
even the sun frantically
clutches to the sky.

Illustration by Lauren L. Hill

Shudder In

I hear the cries of homeless children, the whispers of the forgotten aged, the soft whimpers of the dying, the lament of broken-hearted lovers, and the silence of the lonely.

But I feel no pity. Not for them. Not for myself.

I stand in the middle of the street and I hear these strangled sounds, feeling no pity, and I must tell you that it is a dream, or a nightmare, or perhaps it's a bit of both.

Whichever it is, I awake in a sweat at the moment my dreamed apathy has become an unbearable, unacceptable torment. And if my body was hot a moment ago, it is now cold and I shiver beneath the open window letting in the early morning air of October in Seattle. Instead of getting up to close the window, I reach over to touch the naked body next to mine.

Joy is asleep but does respond a little; she rolls over to face me and allows me to wrap my arms around her. She returns to her sleep and to any dreams she may be having, but having her warm breasts and thighs against me is enough to chase my chill and lull me to my own sleep, though it is a somber sleep.

In the morning Joy is already up and I am alone on the dirty sheets without enough covers. The window is still open and the sunrise has been hidden by the overcast. I hear Joy in the kitchen. This small, second-story apartment makes noise everywhere in it audible, and this morning every noise is annoying. The frying pan banging against the stove top might as well be banging against my head.

She calls my name, "Tobias," and it sounds like a word in a foreign language I don't understand. I feel like a confused infant and curl up, pull more covers on me. Joy comes into the room, smiling. The golden hair flowing over her shoulders is the only sun I will see today. Without moving I imagine the curve of her body beneath the white terrycloth robe (my robe) she's wearing. I want her again, with the same passion as last night.

I move and she comes over to me.

Without a word she drags my feet over the edge of the bed and pulls me up into a sitting position: for an instant she is a nurse, I am an old arthritic man. In the past two minutes I feel I have lived a lifetime, have gone from birth to death, and now I want to live again.

I pull her onto the bed.

"No, no," she says, giggling. "I don't have time. Come eat your breakfast."

I open her robe. Her flesh is smooth and toned.

"No," she says without smiling this time. And she closes her robe and gets up.

My pajama bottoms are on the floor like a napping kitten; I slip into them and follow her into the kitchen.

"I'm sorry," I say.

She turns from the counter and kisses me on the cheek. She's not angry. At least I think she's not angry; we only met a week ago and last night was the first night she stayed at my place. She lives in the dorms on the college campus where I teach.

We sit down to eat the food she's cooked and the eggs are burnt. I don't mention it though, thinking, what do you expect from a nineteen-year-old psychology major? I even lie when she asks me how they are. And I smile at her from the other end of the table. It seems as though I'm looking at her through the wrong end of a telescope: she is the light from a distant celestial body which no longer exists and has reached my eye too late, and too obscurely.

Continuing to choke down the burnt eggs I think about my thirtieth birthday coming up in a few days, and I hang my head over my plate. When I look into the telescope again she's gone. She's at the sink rinsing her plate. Seeing me looking she says, "Those eggs tasted funny."

Then she's dressed and leaving my apartment. The apartment it had taken me seven days of coaxing to get her up to.

"Why don't you stop by tonight," I say before she shuts the door.

She tucks a strand of hair behind her right ear exactly the way my ex-wife did the day she walked out on me three years ago, and I wince. "Maybe," she says. "But I have a lot of mid-term exams coming up, as you well know, and I'm a busy girl."

"I understand," I say.

She smiles and tells me good-bye.

The Half-Light

I raise my hand to wave but the door shuts before it's all the way up. The frame on the wall rattles: a cheap print of *Christina's World,* a painting of a woman with her back to the viewer. It's getting late and I tell myself I have to get ready to go in and teach Humanities and the Western World to students who do not give a damn.

Out my bedroom window, below, I see Joy crossing the gray street with her hands in the pockets of her raincoat. She walks along the sidewalk on the opposite side until a car slows down, and I hear a young man call her name. She goes over to the car, and after a brief conversation through the passenger's window she gets in the backseat. It turns right at the corner, in the direction of the college a few blocks away, and disappears.

Suddenly I remember last night, what she'd told me long after our breathing calmed and the room stilled, long after I opened the window. We'd been talking already but she was drowsy by this time; I could tell by the way she whispered. She whispered as if she were afraid to disturb the midnight silence, as if that moment were something holy, and her hand lay motionless on my chest. Somehow I'd asked about her parents, and she told me her mother was dead and her father hadn't spoken to her in two years.

I didn't ask why her father wasn't speaking to her, didn't offer any type of condolence, didn't even *think* about her situation. I just closed my eyes and slept. Then I dreamt that horrible dream.

Now I look down into the street—the car is gone, Joy is gone—and I am startled by the street's emptiness even though I already knew it was empty. And only now do I think about Joy's situation.

It's frightening that I know so little about her situation. Except for what she told me last night I know nothing; I have no idea who she is. Last night I made love to a young woman named Joy who was beautiful and (virtually) parentless. That's all I know and that's not much.

Spurious speculation frightens me more. Tom Richards (head of the Psychology department) introduced me to Joy in his office. They'd been discussing Freud and sex when I came in, and I'd made some flirtatious repartee when they told me. We all laughed. But now it strikes me how uncannily Tom with his white beard and glasses resembled Freud. I'm sure it's just my imagination, but his open-mouth laugh narrowed his round face in a way I'd never seen before. I feel a sharp chill and a tightness in my throat because it seems that I could have easily been staring at an apparition of the famous, sexually conscious psychoanalyst himself. The image is absurdly ironic yet consequentially ominous.

Tom and I are friends and have been for a couple of years, although he has about twenty-five years on me. I know of his fancy for pretty coeds. He knows of mine. We both know how each of us lost our wives, his having left him many years ago. Since that day he's been alone; he never remarried. The talks we've had over drinks in dimly-lit bars about our past acts and future fantasies of immorality make me shake my head. My mouth is dry and bitter. My hands tremble. I crave a smoke.

I close the window and pick up my wallet on the nightstand. Taking out the scrap of paper with Joy's phone number on it, I throw it in the wastebasket because it's better if I don't have it around anymore. Though I have the number memorized from having dialed it so many times. Then I replace the wallet in my hand with a pack of cigarettes and take one out, light it, and smoke, making myself forget the number. Taking a deep drag, I think of all the times my ex-wife tried to get me to stop, and I feel guilty. The taste of nicotine stains my tongue. The smoke escapes from my mouth and vanishes the way false sympathy does in the ears of the bereaved. The cigarette turns to ash as I hold it. The ticking of the clock sounds more like snickering, and I sigh. Then I cough, hacking fiercely for a minute until I can finally stop. Silence rings.

The room is in half-light. I jam the fading ember into the ashtray. After further consideration I throw the whole pack of cigarettes in the wastebasket and tell myself that this time I will quit. The window is closed, yet I shudder.

And this is not a dream.

Christopher Kalmen

Illustrations by Alvin L. Yazzie

SONNET

The mud-grimed dog-face jostles Death each day
And just as casually, Death returns the favour.
The warrior sees Death coming far away
And faces him with eyes that do not waver.

In brief, ecstatic duels in the sky
The fighter-pilot battles with such lust
For life and victory that when he dies,
He hardly feels Death's overpowering thrust.

The sailor knows his end is in the sea.
Seduced, he fears, yet loves its sad lament.
So when his shell is breached he easily
Surrenders to his chosen element.

Illustration by Tammy Thomas

But generals face their death in mortal dread.
They die at leisure, safe at home, in bed.

Tom Bailey

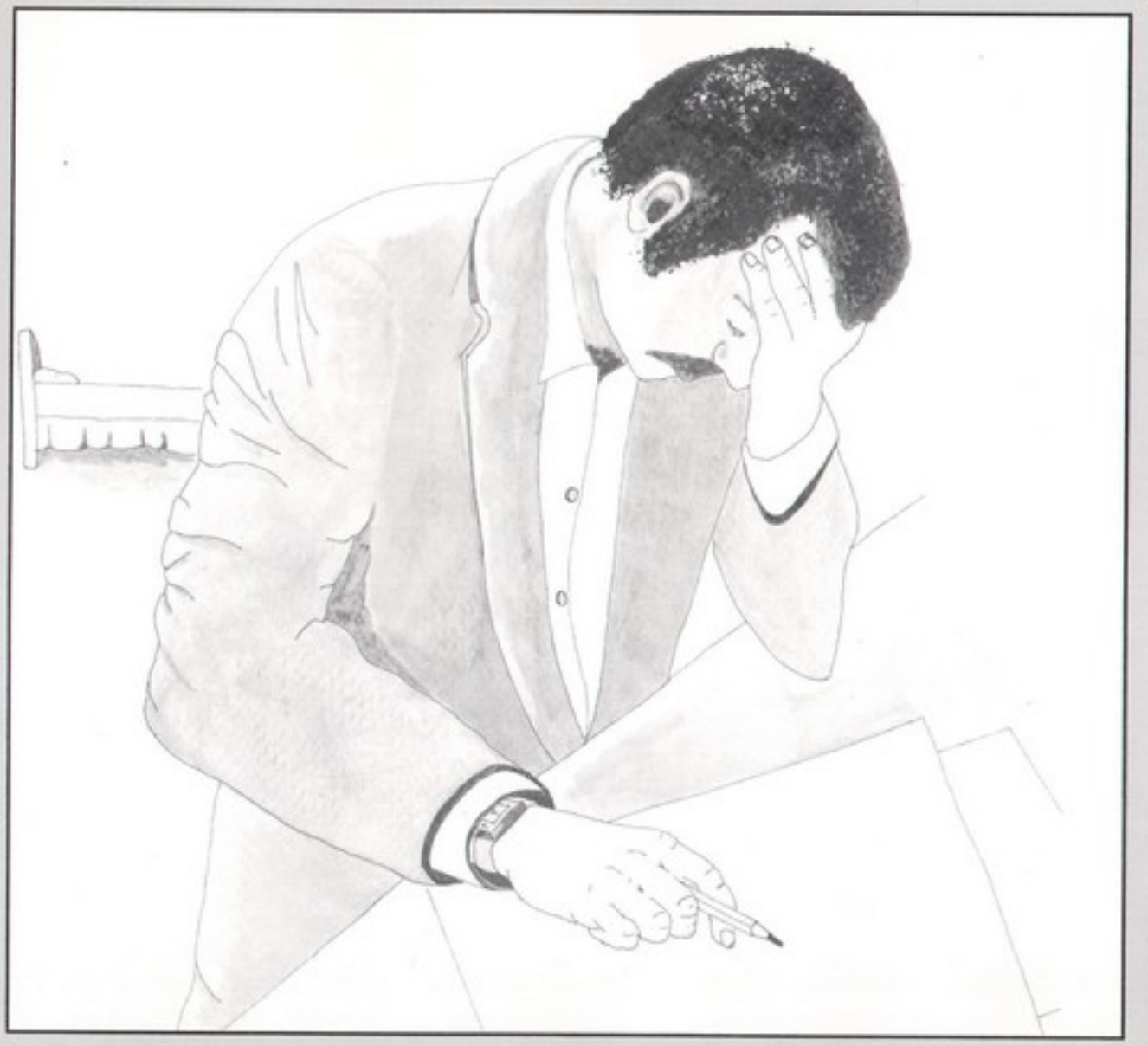
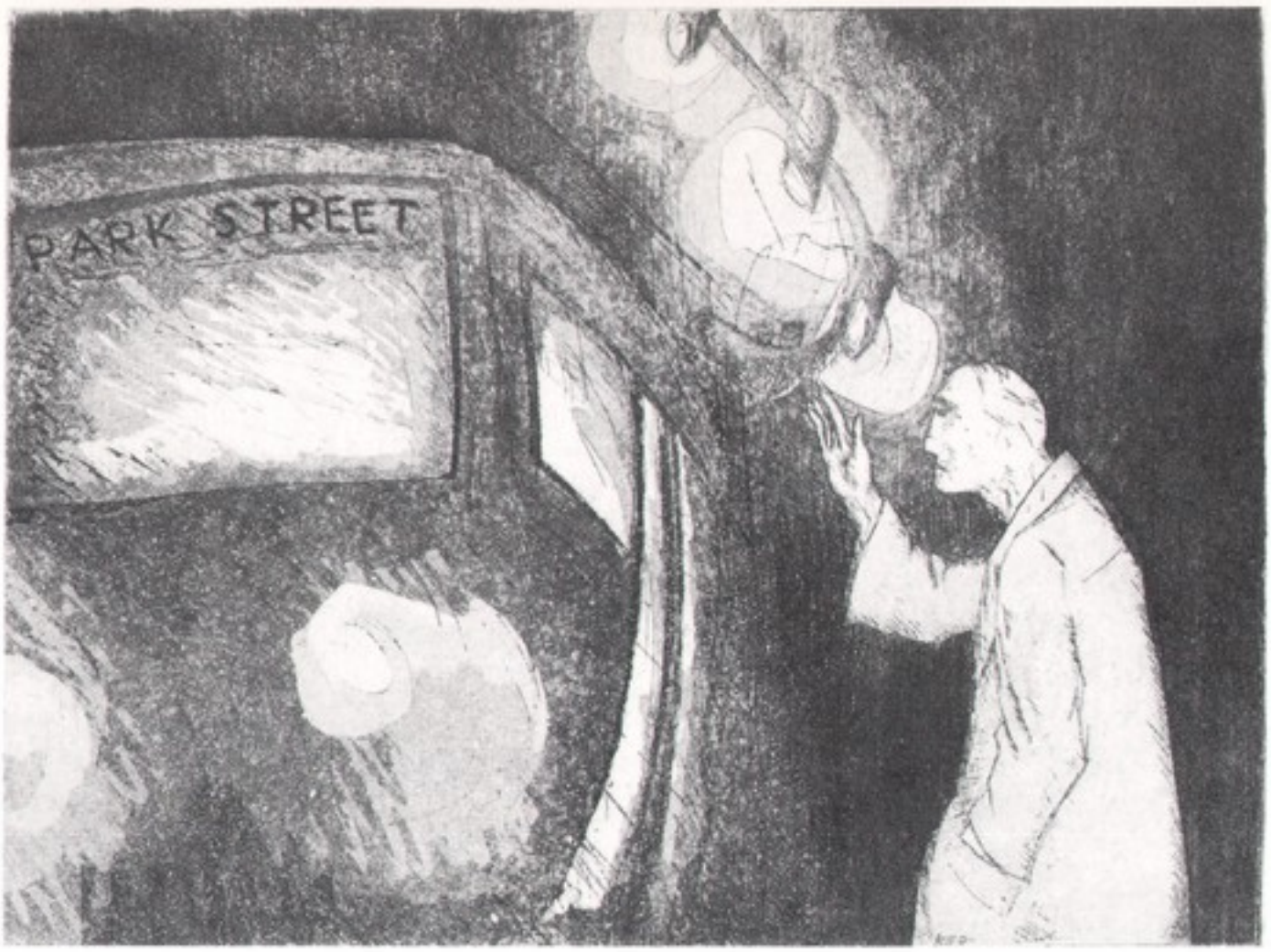


Illustration by Corina Edgar



Print by Jeffery Ryan Keohane

NOWHERE ELSE TO GO

State shelter braces—
Against the sea of faces—that
Are searching for lost traces
With nowhere else to go.

Folks in record crowds,
Folks no longer proud,
Some folks cry out loud—cause
There's nowhere else to go.

650 came last year—
hungry—and in fear
They came from far and near,
From nowhere else to go.

They'll live in make-shift tents.
They couldn't pay their rent.
From everywhere they're sent—cause
There's nowhere else to go.

They're hungry, sick, and poor.
They're knocking at the door,
To flee the city's roar—just
Nowhere else to go.

Some are turned away
And have no place to stay.
What to do but pray—truly
Nowhere else to go.

Weather's turning bitter.
Life's lost all it s glitter.
Hard not to be a quitter—when
There's nowhere else to go.

New social workers hired,
To help the poor and tired.
We have to stoke their fire—
There's nowhere else to go.

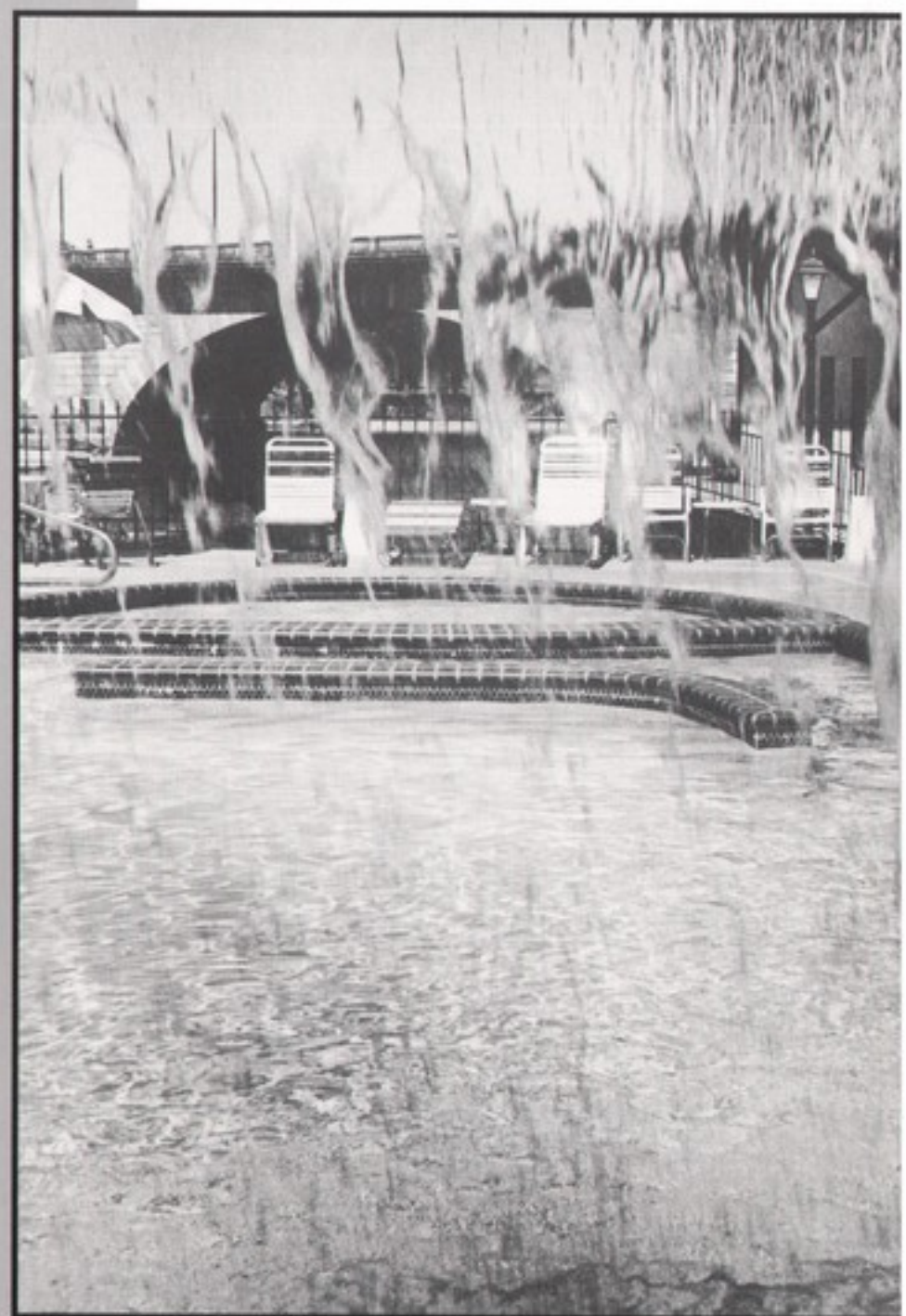
Better boost 'em up today—
We need to find a way!
But briefly they may stay—
And there's NOWHERE ELSE TO GO!!!

Cheryl Thieme

Photograph by Linda Sharp

Photograph by Linda Sharp

Photograph by Janet Ross



Photograph by Linda Sharp

Drawing by Barbara Mason

Drawing by Christina Hillenbrand-Bartelt

Drawing by Kathleen Beard

Photograph by Janet Ross

Illustration by Tammy Thomas

Drawing by Jean Trembley

Illustration by Yvonne Thompson

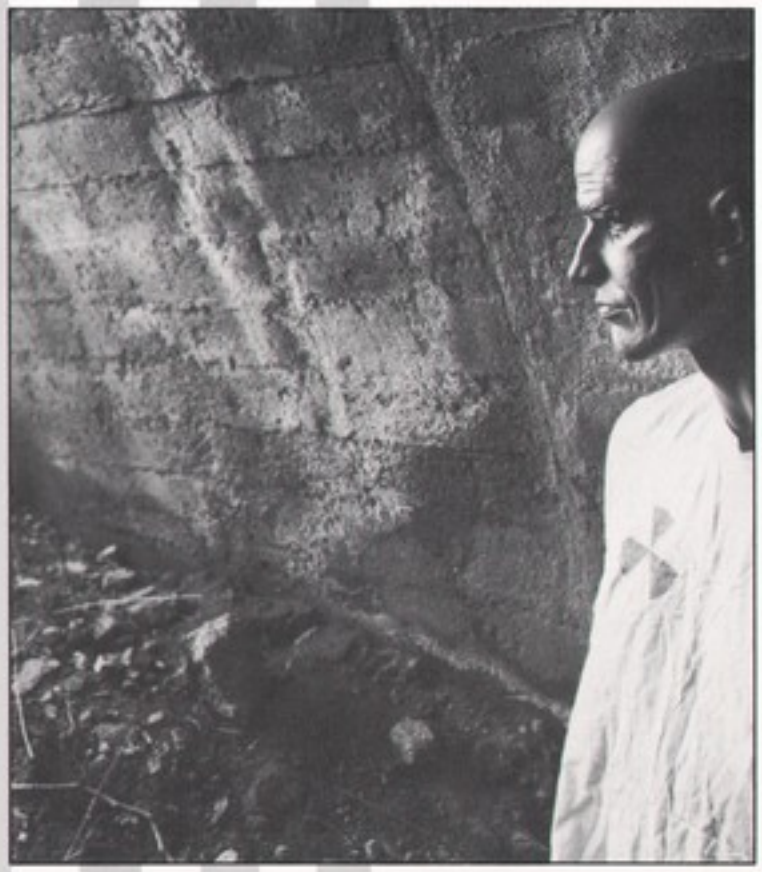


Photo by Mark Hendrickson

POLICY FOR A MINISTRY OF TECHNOLOGY

When the genie, in an ecstasy of freedom,
Exploded out of the bottle
Filling Miz Pringle's kitchen
With his "Hail, O Mistress,"
Turban, silk scimitar, pearls, pantaloons,
Pointy-toed slippers and
"What are your three wishes, Mistress,"
She screamed and covered her eyes and cried,
"Oh, mercy! Oh, please go away. I wish you'd
Go back where you came from."

Later she spoke to him through the glass.
"Now I'll let you out again
But I wish you to appear
As a sober, decent, elderly,
Respectable dignified and accomplished lady,
An appropriate housekeeper for an old spinster.
I can't have you swooshing around
In those clothes, whooping and hollering
Scaring the cats and upsetting the neighbours."

Well, anything beats eternity in a bottle.
Miz P now has breakfast in bed
While Miz G vacuums the carpets,
Dusts the porcelain, cleans the windows
And polishes the furniture with lemon oil.
Her comportment and performance are immaculate.
The cats and neighbours love her.
Though the subject never arises,
Prudent Miz P retains one wish unused.

Tom Bailey

Illustration by Barbara Mason

ETERNAL QUEST

All these bright moments that we share,
Will in the flow of time soon disappear,
Yet we may call them back again,
To dance for us,
In the secret places of the heart:
Birdsong at dawn,
While we lie in each other's arms;
Sun-glint on rushing water,
Where trout leap high;
Heaven's winds,
That herd white clouds,
Like wayward sheep;
Dappled shadows
Of whispering leaves,
Swaying in summer moon-haze.
Let us not be sad to part with all these wonders.
When they have laid us safely in our tomb,
We shall rest awhile,
Then,
Shaking off our somnolence,
We shall return with joy,
To the primal source,
There to await the undeniable call,
That shall send us forth,
Voyagers again,
To wander other worlds,
In other times,
And show that love itself,
Throughout all changes,
Remains forever new,
Forever strong as fate.

Wallace Bastian

Illustration by Anna Woll

Spoils of Time

Once
he moved through life—a sturdy
tank on tracks of steel—
smashing over every obstacle
life put in his way.
But
that was long ago, long
before he fought a war
or won a Purple Heart
or grew old.
Now
alone and forgotten, he fights
the battle of survival, always
searching for a path to glory
along the skirmish line.

Now
there are no medals given—
no Bronze or Silver Star—
no crimson decoration—
no thought to valor.
Now
there is only apathy—
forms in triplicate—
endless waiting lines—
inevitable surrender.
Now
when his spirit bleeds, and
pride lies wounded at his feet
his only award is a handout of
surplus cheese, or a
doled out dab of butter.

June Drummond

Photograph by Jean Wilson

Photograph by Jean Wilson

STING

I sense the curved threat
Yellow body hugging flesh
Sharp scimitar plunged!

Veronica Tyler

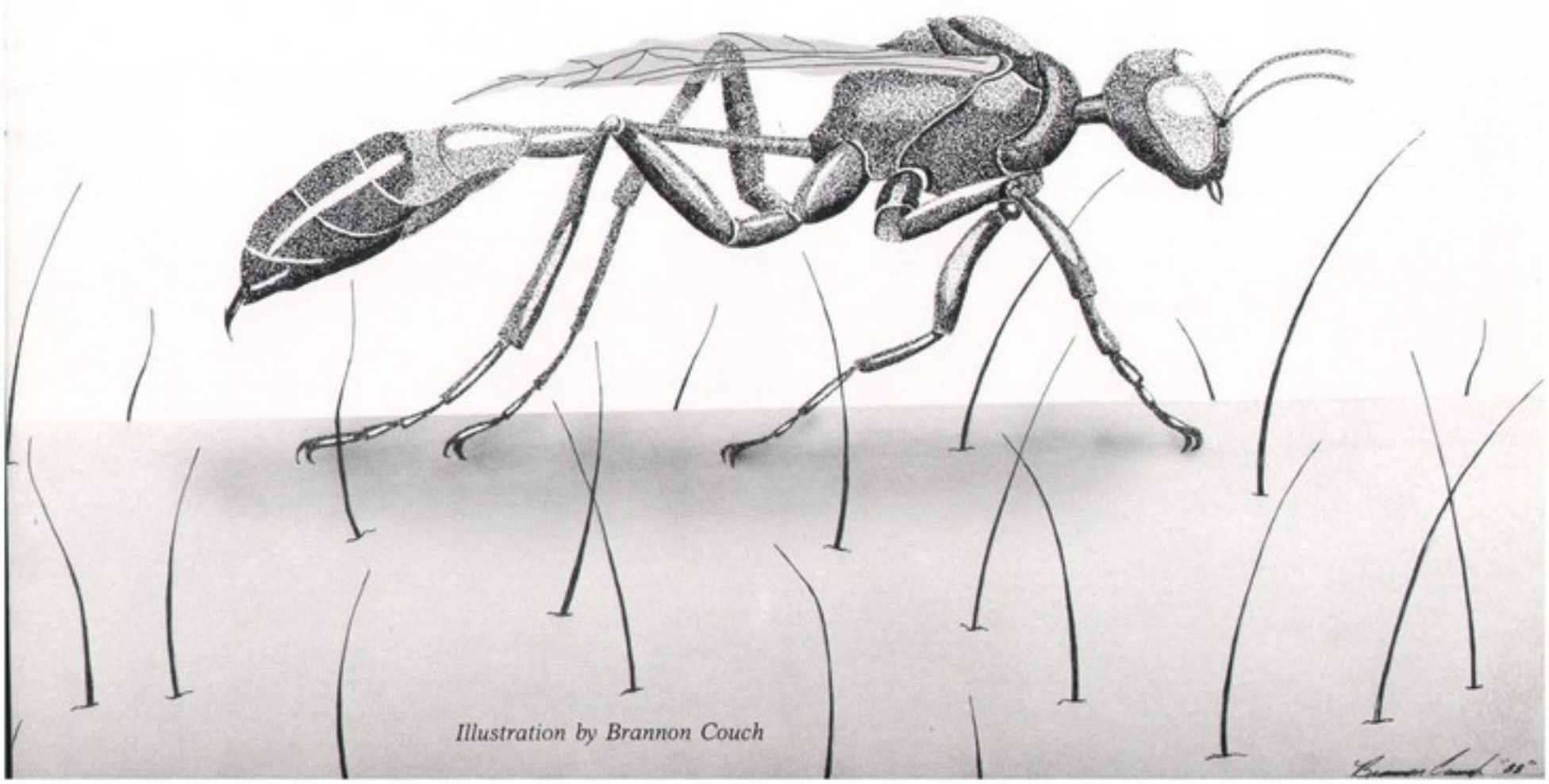
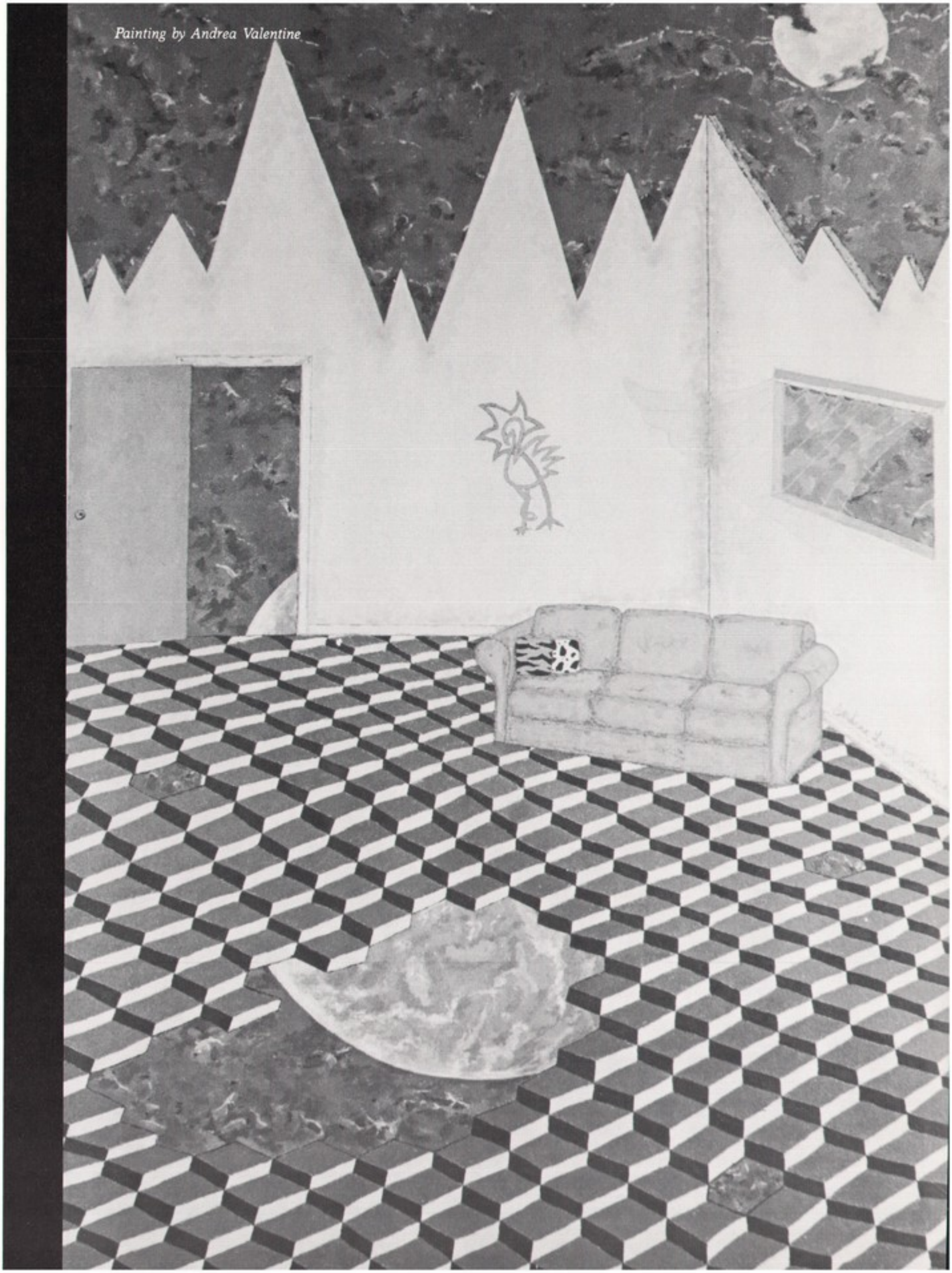


Illustration by Brannon Couch



Painting by Andrea Valentine

Illustration by Barbara D. Zirinsky

Cover Design
Christina Hillenbrand-Bartelt

Photography
Janet Ross
Linda Sharp
Jean Wilson

Faculty
Edith Crow
Deborah Ford
Susan Lang-McMonagle
Glen Peterson
Bonny Stauffer

Technical Assistance
Brannon Couch
Judith DeFord
Lauren L. Hill
Christina Hillenbrand-Bartelt
Dana Klaas
Gail Mollring
Virginia Van Tuyl
Alvin L. Yazzie
Barbara D. Zirinsky

Graphic Design
Kathleen Beard
Shelley Bernal
Corina Edgar
Lauren L. Hill
Christina Hillenbrand-Bartelt
Charles Lemieux
Barbara Mason
Duane Numkena
Julie Riley
Andrea Valentine

Yavapai College

creative arts magazine